

## CLAIMS

- 5           1.       A device for retracting gingival tissue away from a tooth, the device comprising a preformed integral closed loop of material sized and dimensioned to be packed into a sulcus associated with the tooth, the closed loop having an inner surface suitable for placement against the tooth and an outer surface suitable for placement against gingival tissue.
- 10          2.       A device as a recited in claim 1, wherein the loop consists of at least two materials.
- 15          3.       A device as a recited in claim 2, wherein the loop consists essentially of two materials.
4.       A method of retracting gingival tissue away from a tooth having a sulcus associated therewith, comprising the step of inserting into the sulcus a closed loop of material as defined in claims 1.
- 20          5.       A method of preparing a tooth for a dental procedure comprising the steps of:  
                    (A) removing a portion of a tooth to create a tooth abutment;  
                    (B) placing a device as recited in claim 1 around the tooth abutment;  
                    and  
                    (C) packing the device into a sulcus associated with the tooth.
- 25          6.       A method of preparing a tooth as recited in claim 5, further comprising the step of (D) removing the device from the sulcus.
- 30          7.       A method of a preparing a tooth as recited in claim 5, wherein the step of packing the device into the sulcus comprises the steps of (i) placing a pressure cap around the tooth abutment on top of the device and (ii) exerting pressure on the pressure cap.
- 35          8.       A method of preparing a tooth as recited in claim 5, further comprising, after the step of removing a portion of the tooth, the step of preparing a provisional restoration, and wherein the step of packing the device into the sulcus comprises



16. A method of preparing a tooth as recited in claim 8, further comprising, after the step of removing a portion of the tooth, the step of applying injection paste to the device before the device is placed around the tooth abutment.
- 5 17. A method of preparing a tooth as recited in claim 8, further comprising, after the step of removing a portion of the tooth, the step of applying injection paste into the sulcus before the device is placed around the tooth abutment.
- 10 18. A method of preparing a tooth as recited in claim 9, further comprising, after the step of removing a portion of the tooth, the step of applying injection paste to the device before the device is placed around the tooth abutment.
- 15 19. A method of preparing a tooth as recited in claim 9, further comprising, after the step of removing a portion of the tooth, the step of applying injection paste into the sulcus before the device is placed around the tooth abutment.
- 20 20. A method of preparing a tooth for a dental procedure comprising the steps of:  
(A) removing a portion of a tooth to create a tooth abutment;  
(B) preparing a provisional restoration having a margin;  
(C) adhering material to the margin of the provisional restoration;  
(D) placing the provisional restoration on the tooth abutment; and  
(E) exerting pressure on the provisional restoration to pack the material into a sulcus associated with the tooth.